

DECISION OF THE 31st CMS STANDING COMMITTEE

Proposed Conditions and Parameters for an Interim Merger of UNEP/ASCOBANS Secretariat with UNEP/CMS Secretariat

Interim Status of a Merged Secretariat and Role of COP

Subject to a decision by the reconvened ASCOBANS Meeting of the Parties to favour an interim merger with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat:

1. A merger should be planned and financed on an interim basis for the period 1 January 2007 - 31 December 2008, while guaranteeing that the separate institutional integrity of each organisation is maintained.
2. UNEP and the CMS Secretariat should present a report on the operation of the merger to the 9th Conference of the Parties in November 2008.
3. If so requested by the ASCOBANS Parties, CMS COP9 should take a decision on the continuation of the merger, in consultation with the Parties to ASCOBANS.

Finance and Other Administrative Matters

Subject to clearance from UNEP/UNON:

4. Parties to ASCOBANS must ensure that the full additional costs of undertaking Secretariat duties for ASCOBANS are repaid to CMS. The budget at Annex A as refined, should be a guideline in securing this. ASCOBANS Parties would continue to pay annual subscriptions to the ASCOBANS Trust Fund.
5. The Chair of the ASCOBANS MOP, before the MOP reconvenes in December 2006, should take the lead in negotiations with the Executive Director of UNEP to seek UNEP's assistance towards transitional costs, and in facilitating the new arrangements. If these negotiations are successful, they would reduce the costs at 4 above.
6. The two half-time posts (P3 and GS5) which would be allocated to ASCOBANS under Annex A should be appointed on a temporary and/or consultancy basis to ensure there are no further costs falling on CMS at the end of the interim period. One of these posts should be designated as the ASCOBANS Coordinator.
7. Under a merged budget, fractions of time of existing CMS officials would be allocated to ASCOBANS work. The CMS Secretariat should ensure that the funds paid in the ASCOBANS budget in respect of these time allocations, are utilised to provide offsetting resources, including consultancies, for the achievement of the CMS Strategic Plan.
8. The CMS Secretariat, in consultation with UNEP, should submit a written, interim report on the operation of a merged secretariat for ASCOBANS to the 32nd Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee in 2007, and subsequently to the 9th Meeting of the CMS Parties in 2008.